

gal-dem is an online and print magazine written exclusively by women of colour. It's no secret that the journalism industry is staggeringly middle-class, 94 percent white and 55 percent male, and our remit is to challenge the homogenisation of newsrooms in a way that no one has done before. Our very existence proves that WoC can organically excel in every corner of the media industry, even though, at present, we're not well-represented within it.

Our project launched in September 2015 after Liv Little, editor-in-chief, then a student at the University of Bristol, couldn't find another publication which was predominantly focused on the thoughts and opinions of women of colour in the UK. She reached out to a variety of different young WoC she knew, and plenty that she didn't, and gal-dem was born. Since then, as a totally volunteer-led publication, with over 70 regular contributors and, 20 sub-editors, 15 illustrators and six section editors, we've managed to make waves in the journalism world. We've won two awards for our work, including Online Comment Site of the Year [at the Comment Awards](#) (up against the Financial Times and Media Diversified), and a Screen Nation award for favourite arts and entertainment magazine.

From the [original reporting](#) of our [skin lightening series](#), parts of which were picked up by [major outlets](#), to our [260 page gal-dem print edition](#), what we've discovered is that although people may believe in the work of WoC, they don't necessarily engage with our excellence and the idea that we really have been out here creating culture for a very long time until they are physically faced with continual articles on their newsfeed, or a glossy catalogue sized print magazine, or [watching 4000+ people pile into the V&A museum](#) for our Friday Late takeover ([called "historic" in the Guardian](#)). And then it clicks in their head that we *outchea*, we've been making our mark and we really ain't going nowhere.

As a magazine which centres the voices of women of colour our voice is strongly identifiable. Often, within mainstream publications, there is an expectation that as women of colour we are only able to write about topics which relate to our gender and cultural background – here, our writers are able to discuss any topics which they are interested in. It's important to for us to support emerging writers, but for our contributors who have been in the industry for a substantial amount of time (such as Varaidzo, our arts and culture editor whose [work features in The Good Immigrant](#)), it is refreshing to be able to write freely, without censorship and in an authentic voice. The "voice" of gal-dem is multifaceted and something which isn't seen in the majority of mainstream publications. The category "women of colour" encompasses many different voices and with that comes many different thoughts, styles of writings and opinions which sets our publication apart from many others.

As the opinions editor at gal-dem and a trained journalist who works for publications including the Guardian, the Financial Times, VICE and Dazed, I am very aware of the “pale male stale” atmosphere perpetuated by so many newsrooms. I’m no longer afraid to call it out because I truly believe something has to change. Amongst other reasons, publications would be less likely to produce content that are blatantly inaccurate, or, at their worst, flat-out racist. Some of my favourite articles written by gal-dem contributors have been the antithesis of this type of ignorance, including [Sorry, your label has expired: growing up Anglo-Indian](#), [The Very Black Body](#), [Fam, do you not know what a reload is?](#), [Oxford University’s first disabled scholar is being prevented from beginning his studies](#) and (the rather controversial) [Men are trash people in bed](#).

Our list of objectives for progression are endless – we're working towards producing more original written long-form features and video content, our next print publication, another collaboration with the V&A, a women in comedy event, a poetry event, some festival media partnerships and collaborations with more arts institutions. Our overall objective is to transition into becoming a sustainable business which is able to further the creative, political and general aspirations of women of colour predominantly, but not exclusively, in Britain today. With the precarious state of diversity charities like Creative Access, the work we are doing couldn't be more important. With the help of people who understand why we're doing what we do, we want to create our own network and shift the media landscape away from being an elitist old boys club.

Practically, we would use any money received from the award to help fund our first ever office space – and to support two of our editors in quitting their current full-time roles so they can work on gal-dem full-time instead.

Although we don't want to be presumptuous, we like to think that Georgina Henry could have been a fan of our work, especially as she was the launch editor of Comment is Free – who commissioned us to write [one of our first pieces on gal-dem](#) in a national.